

BOSTON INFORMER

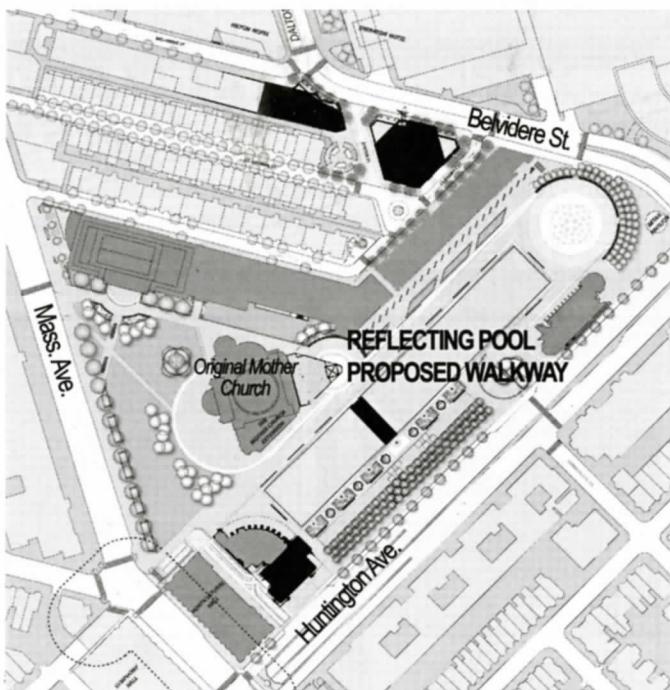
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The newsletter for people who care about Boston

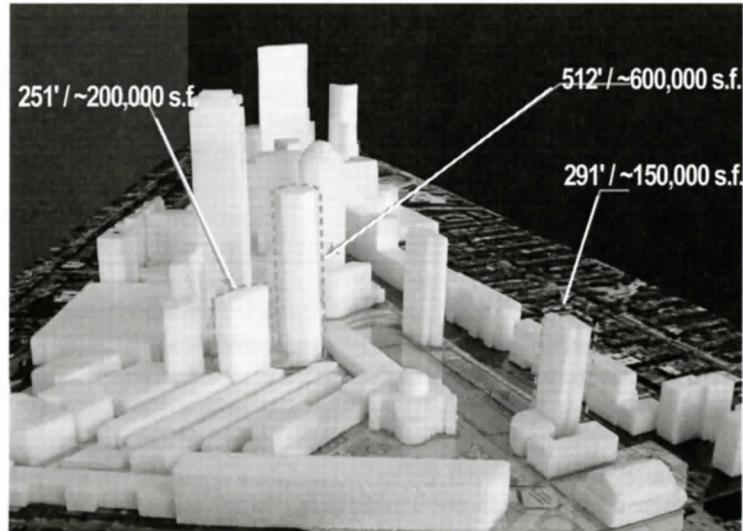
Summer 2010

First Church of Christ Master Plan

Christian Science Center — The First Church of Christ, Scientist has proposed a plan for the development of the Christian Science Center Plaza in Back Bay/South End. The plan features developing approximately 950,000 s.f. in three new buildings. Two of the new buildings are proposed for the Dalton Street/Belvidere Street parking lot and the third for the area along Huntington Avenue near the Sunday School building. The proposed Dalton/Belvidere buildings are 512 feet high (45 stories) and 251 feet high (20 stories). The taller building is characterized as a “high rise” and the



Source for both images: Elkus Manfredi Architects. Used courtesy of The First Church of Christ, Scientist.



smaller as “mid rise.” The proposed building on Huntington Avenue would be slightly smaller at 291 feet (shorter than the existing 177 Huntington Ave. office building at 25 stories) and would contain 150,000 s.f. of office space.

Impacts from new shadows would generally be on Christian Science land or on rooftops to the north of the plaza, although the plan states that a small portion of the Southwest Corridor Park would be in shadow in the early evening in summer. To achieve the plan’s first objective, “enhance open space,” the plan proposes rebuilding the reflecting pool/fountain 18 feet shorter, reducing the depth from 26 inches to 6-12 inches and creating a pedestrian walkway along the path of a previous walkway that existed before redevelopment in the 1960s. The popular spray fountain is to remain and water use will be reduced from 5 million gallons per year to 2 million. The master plan will be reviewed under Article 80 of the zoning code and additional details on the proposed buildings will also undergo Article 80 review.

Longfellow Bridge Rehabilitation —

MassDOT is nearing completion of its Task Force work to develop alternatives for the Longfellow Bridge cross-section and allocation of pavement and lanes. MassDOT convened the Task Force in June 2010 to broaden the alternatives it would study in the federal Environmental Assessment.

MassDOT's original proposal was to maintain two travel lanes in each direction and widen the sidewalks and bike lanes. The bridge itself is historic and cannot be widened. More than eight alternatives have been generated through the Task Force, including alternatives with one lane in each direction, giant bike lanes big enough for a family to ride side by side, "hourglass"

scheme with the middle of the bridge narrowing to one lane to allow social activities to take place on the widened sidewalks. Progress is happening as the Task Force narrowed alternatives at the Sept. 29 meeting, and MassDOT agreed that one lane toward Cambridge was acceptable.

In addition, MassDOT is studying a new pedestrian bridge from Charles Circle to the Esplanade to replace the existing non-ADA compliant and inadequate pedestrian bridge as well as improved connections to parkland and bikeways from the bridge in the Cambridge side.

A public meeting Oct. 6 at the Shriners Hospital Auditorium will review progress to date. See <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/abp/longfellow.aspx> for details on the Task Force and alternatives.

Welcome to The Boston Informer

The goal is simple: Provide concise public information on construction projects, planning initiatives, and whatever else affects living and working in Boston. Welcome to The Boston Informer!

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MassDOT is working with pedestrian & bike advocates to rehabilitate and possibly 'transform' the Longfellow Bridge...



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Longfellow Bridge future?

You Were Asking

Q. I heard the Friends of Copley Square is back. True?

A. Yes. The almost defunct Friends of Copley Square has reorganized after three years of inactivity. The Trust reports its endowment is nearing the \$1.5 million mark required to deal with park maintenance issues. Plans are underway to revive holiday and other traditional events. FOCS chair: Paul Tormey, Fairmont Copley Plaza; President: Dan Donohue, Lenox Hotel. Contact FOCS care of Back Bay Assn., 617-266-1991.

Q. Is the restaurant planned for the end of Long Wharf, Doc's, ever going to be built?

A. The Boston Informer covered this project in fall 2006. It has been approved by all relevant agencies, but a group of North End residents filed suit in Massachusetts Superior Court to block it. Opposition stems from fears of noise and rowdiness.

Q. I read that the planned Edward M. Kennedy Institute near the John F. Kennedy Library in Dorchester is receiving \$59 million in federal funds in addition to about \$50 million in private funds. Why are taxpayers contributing so much to a private institution?

A. Look at the name.

Q. I heard UMass Boston's Master Plan includes its first dormitories. My daughter will be applying to college in two years—will the dorms be ready?

A. No. A small number of beds (2,000) are in later phases of the campus development, possibly as far off as 20+ years. Overall, the \$1 billion Master Plan will add close to 2.5 times more gross s. f., but Phase 1 will build only one building, a 217,000 s. f. Integrated Sciences Complex. Of note is Master Plan projects are expected to generate about 15,400 new campus trips, most of which will be on transit, leaving 1,825-2,606 new auto trips (numbers vary in Master Plan and Environmental Notification Form). Yet there is no explanation of how the existing shuttle bus service will be expanded to accommodate thousands of new transit trips and what entity is responsible.

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